



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**LOS ANGELES BOARD OF SUPERVISORS SUPPORTS OBAMA
PLAN FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

On Tuesday, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors voted to support the Obama Administration's recently proposed plan for improving access to quality preschool, infant-toddler care and home visitation services. The plan would invest \$75 billion over 10 years to serve more children in quality early learning services and an additional \$750 million to help states improve the quality of their services. A recent analysis of the plan projected that California could receive up to \$335 million in new federal preschool funding during the first year of the plan's implementation. In addition, the plan calls for state matching funds and allows states to build on their existing investments instead of creating new programs.

The motion, authored by Chairman Mark Ridley-Thomas and supported by Supervisors Gloria Molina and Zev Yaroslavsky, authorizes county officials to send a letter of support to the President and Vice President of the United States, leaders of the Senate, the House of Representatives and to each senator and representative serving Los Angeles County in

Congress. In addition, the letter will encourage policy makers to ensure flexibility so that local pre-school programs can implement a federally-supported preschool expansion plan. Further, the letter encourages policy makers to support the President's plan, to voice their support to their federal representatives and to begin the planning process so that California is best positioned to qualify for this potential funding.

For years now, experts have said that brain development begins prior to birth and advances rapidly through the age of three, making it possible for very young children to learn to read, write, add and subtract. Investing in early learning during the first five years of a child's life is critical, with significant consequences for a child's long-term health and emotional well-being if they are not enrolled in pre-school or early education programs.

And yet, the United States ranks 25th in public spending for early learning among developed countries. The inability to recognize the need for early education has serious consequences that impact society including unemployment and crime and will affect the nation's future development of a competitive and educated workforce.

"The County of Los Angeles has a lot to benefit from passage of this plan," said Chairman Ridley-Thomas. "It is a matter of priorities, a strategic investment in our future and a leveraging of our human capital in a cost effective way."

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